

EPISODE 266

# The Truth About Your Core Muscles, Diastasis Recti, & The Human Kettlebell – With Guest Katy Bowman

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**Shawn Stevenson:** Welcome to *The Model Health Show*. This is fitness and nutrition expert, Shawn Stevenson, and I'm so grateful for you tuning in with me today.

This is a very special episode because we're talking about something that I truly feel very, very, very passionate about, and that is teaching folks to become more physically literate, alright? Physically literate.

When we think about literacy, we tend to think about reading, writing, arithmetic. Right? The three R's, but it's not really, but that's what people say.

I'm talking about being physically literate. I'm talking about being able to move your body in a healthful manner within space, and also internally having your internal cellular matrix to work at an optimal level within you, alright?

So this physical literacy is influenced by so many factors, and as our guest today has taught me previously, our environment literally shapes our bodies, alright? Our environment shapes our bodies.

Many of us are not aware that we've become adaptive or mutated to be able to sit in a chair. We are awesome at sitting in chairs, alright? We are like world class, so many of us, and our bodies get adapted to that.

And so we might end up with tight hip flexors, and things going on with our SI joint, lower back stuff, imbalances in our abdominal wall, which we're definitely going to talk today at a high level.

So whether you're just kicking butt, and training, and are no stranger to the gym atmosphere, or getting out and putting in work, what you're going to learn today is going to help to supplement your knowledge base in a way that I think is going to really carry on in your life for many years to come.

Now speaking of your abdominals, your abdominal matrix, you know you've got the rectus abdominis, transverse abdominis, you've got your obliques, and you've got all these other tie-ins.

This part of your body isn't just operating in space. It's not just doing some crunches and planks is what's going to get you the appearance that you want. There's a lot of stuff going on behind the scenes that you're going to learn about today as well.

And even how your ab muscles come together, they actually all tie together by a very thin tissue, and once you understand this and some of the dysfunctions that can come along with your abdominal wall, it can be really sobering.

And a lot of people today are dealing with issues with their abdominal wall, weakness or even deformities of some sort, because they're lacking some of this knowledge. And these little movements - it's not the big movements, it's not the doing 200 crunches, or like doing the stand-up crunches.

Floyd Mayweather would start on the ground and then stand- what? Why did you do that? I guess it's pretty to look at, but I don't know if that translates over into winning boxing matches.

But we can do all these different creative movement patterns with our abs, and it's great, but what about the small things that help to ensure the health of your core, all of this stuff?

I mean once you understand just how important these muscles are, it's not just about looking good, they're important in pretty much every movement you do, and it's not until you lose it that you actually realize how valuable it was.

And I don't want that to happen to you, and if you have struggled with some of the issues that we're talking about today, I want to also provide you with solutions, some real world solutions to help to get you from where you are to where you truly deserve to be.

Now before we do that, I want to first point out something that is often overlooked in our culture, and it's making a big change right now, and I like to think that I have contributed to this change, and that is our sleep. Our sleep quality, alright? Not quantity, but the quality of our sleep and getting optimal sleep.

Because there are plenty of people who sleep for seven, eight, nine hours and still wake up feeling like 'le train wreck' every day because their body is not actually going into the proper sleep cycles because there might be issues with melatonin, there might be issues with cortisol, there might be issues with norepinephrine, there might be issues with oxytocin, or serotonin.

There are so many different components going on behind the scenes that's helping to regulate our sleep cycles and getting us into those brain wave frequencies correlated with great sleep.

So even the transitional things like falling asleep, not waking up frequently, and all those things. And here's one of the big issues, your body likes to be cool during sleep.

And specifically- so insomniacs in this particular study, and these are individuals with chronic sleep issues, and they get this label or diagnosis of insomnia, tend to have significantly warmer body temperature than normal right before bed. Interesting, right? Interesting.

So to help combat this issue, researchers at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine conducted a study to find a way to cool off these insomniacs in the study and determine if that would in fact have an impact on their overall sleep quality, and it was awesome.

What they discovered was when fitted with these cooling caps- so they just put these cooling caps onto the test subjects, they found that the insomniacs actually took about thirteen minutes to fall asleep now, when they struggled mightily to fall asleep sometimes for even several hours.

On average now they're taking thirteen minutes to fall asleep, compared to sixteen minutes average for the healthy control group. So they actually started falling asleep faster by cooling off their temperature by one degree, alright?

What's also interesting is that the patients diagnosed with insomnia ended up sleeping for 89% of the time they were in bed, which is pretty much correlated with the time that the healthy control group had as well. Alright?

Same difference for people with clinical insomnia, by simply cooling off their body by just one degree.

So again, the body likes to be cool, and this study demonstrated that cooling the body temperature helped to 'balance out' those with chronic sleep struggles at about a 75% success rate.

Ambien can't do that, alright? Ambien can't do that. Who's talking about these things? The studies are there, but again the human body likes to be cool. It's a process called thermoregulation.

There's actually a correlated drop in your core body temperature when it gets dark outside if you have normal kind of light and dark patterns that help to facilitate biochemical processes in your body to help you to sleep, alright?

So if it's too warm in your environment, or you're even generating more heat because of the sheets, and the covers, and that kind of stuff that you're using, that can be a deterrent to you actually getting the sleep quality that you're looking for.

So for me, every night, as soon as I got this, it just became like a must. I don't necessarily even like traveling as much now, like sleeping in a hotel or Airbnb, because they don't have these. This is my Ettitude sheets, alright? My Ettitude sheets.

So first of all, these sheets are thermoregulating, alright? Thermoregulating. That's what we talked about earlier, so they're supportive. They're moisture wicking and breathable so it helps to kind of- some folks get their sweat on at night, wick away that, and leaves the skin surface feeling cooler so you're not like insulating and generating all of this excess heat when you're in your sheets.

And also, first of all, why are they able to do this? This is Bamboo Lyocell, alright? Bamboo Lyocell is what they're made from.

Huh? It sounds really fancy, doesn't it? It absolutely is fancy, and on top of that, they're also free from harmful chemicals, irritants, allergens, and they're hypoallergenic, so they're great for folks with sensitive skin.

And these are some of the messages that I've received, and these beautiful stories about people struggling with psoriasis, and like they finally- like their big struggle is sleeping at night because the sheets hurt. And I didn't used to think about this stuff, like whatever count cotton sheets, I just didn't care.

I was just like, 'I'm a guy, just let me sleep.' Alright? But when I first had the opportunity to sleep on my Ettitude sheets, which I say *my* Ettitude sheets because it's what I sleep on whenever I'm at home, and these just rotate. I've got different sets, they rotate, rotate.

And it was like- and I've said this before, it was like sleeping in lotion, alright? It was like so- the way that your skin just- it's just really hard to describe. Whereas before, I was sleeping on like- before I met my wife, I still had sheets that my grandma gave me when I first went to college, alright? And they were sharp, alright?

Literally it was like sleeping on a combination of like sandpaper and graham cracker crumbs. Alright? That's how it felt. But now, Ettitude is my go-to. Again, no harmful chemicals, irritants, no allergens, and also they're antimicrobial.

These sheets are actually antimicrobial, self-deodorizing, and they inhibit the bacterial growth to ensure that you keep a healthy sleep environment.

So again, these are made from organic Bamboo Lyocell, which is as fine as 1,000 count Egyptian cotton, but this is less expensive. This is less expensive.

This is an incredible process, an incredible company that's doing good things for the planet, because also it's not taking up the resources by using harmful chemicals, and

also consumes one third of the water that's needed to grow all of that cotton that's used for sheets that are not even really comparable in my opinion.

So I want you to make sure to get yourself some Ettitude sheets, sleep healthy, sleep better. Go to [www.Ettitude.com/model](http://www.Ettitude.com/model). That's [www.Ettitude.com/mode](http://www.Ettitude.com/mode) and guess what?

They're going to give you 10% off your first purchase of any of their incredible sheets, and they also have some other cool stuff.

Some nighttime pajama type items as well, so make sure to head over and check them out. Sleep on it, think on it, dream on it, if you don't love it you can send it back for a full refund, but you won't. But you won't, you're going to love these sheets.

So head over and check them out. I've been utilizing Ettitude sheets for well over a year now, and I just love them. I love them so much, [www.Ettitude.com/model](http://www.Ettitude.com/model) for 10% off, and now let's get to the iTunes review of the week.

**iTunes Review:** Another five star review titled 'Treasure Trove of Positive Information' by Bess Ogden.

'Hey Shawn! My best friend turned me onto your podcast a few months ago. Since then, you've gotten me through multiple long flights and house cleaning sessions learning, laughing, taking notes, passing on your gems to anyone who's interested.

I'm 53 and one thing I've definitely learned from a lifelong of working hard to maintain a healthy body weight and fitness level is that change is necessary. How I eat, how I exercise, what I choose to do with the time I have to continue to thrive.

There is not one answer. You've helped me navigate the research, apply, and test the most current knowledge in my own life. I look forward to each and every new podcast you create. Thank you, Bess Ogden.'

**Shawn Stevenson:** That was amazing, thank you so much for sharing that, and that's a great segue into the episode today about just continuing to move forward, because that's what it's really all about. And you are a superhero in that, and I'm so grateful to fly with you, and I promise you much more good stuff is on the way.

And guys, if you've yet to do so, pop over to iTunes and leave a review for the show. It means so much to me. And by the way, for even more with *The Model Health Show*, I hope that you are taking advantage of *Model Mondays*. Alright? *Model Mondays*.

I'm sending you out every single Monday some stuff to help you kick off the week that is even more in-depth information about an episode of the show, or some resources that I'm utilizing currently, books that I'm reading, all kinds of cool stuff.

So go to [www.TheModelHealthShow.com/mondays](http://www.TheModelHealthShow.com/mondays) and get access to *Model Mondays*. Alright? And on that note, let's get to our special guest and our topic of the day.

Part-time biomechanist, part-time science communicator, and full-time mover, Katy Bowman has educated hundreds of thousands of people on the role movement plays in the body and in the world.

Blending a scientific approach with straight talk about sensible whole life movement solutions, her website and award winning podcast *Move Your DNA* reaches hundreds of thousands of people every month, and thousands have taken her live classes.

Her books, which she has a lot of them, she's always writing a book, the bestselling book, 'Move Your DNA' and also she has 'Simple Steps to Foot Pain Relief,' a book we're going to be talking about today.

'Diastasis Recti,' 'Don't Just Sit There,' which is one of my favorite books, essential read. 'Whole Body Barefoot,' 'Alignment Matters,' and several others have been critically acclaimed and translated worldwide.

Passionate about human movement outside of exercise, Katy volunteers her time to support the larger re-integration of movement in the human lives by providing movement courses across widely varying demographics, and working with nonprofits promoting nature education.

She also directs and teaches at the Nutritious Movement Center Northwest in Washington State, and travels the globe to teach nutrition movement courses in person, and spends as much time outside as possible with her husband and children.

And the fourth time appearance on *The Model Health Show*, alright? So this is only the second person to do this, and this means they're like one of my favorite people in the world, I'd like to welcome back to Miss Katy Bowman. How are you doing today, Katy?

**Katy Bowman:** Wow, wow thank you. Four times, that's amazing.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yes, I know. Right?

**Katy Bowman:** I'm like the Alec Baldwin.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Keep coming back.

**Katy Bowman:** That's right, I will always come back. Love your show, love what you do, thank you.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Thank you so much, Katy. So you just got back from New Zealand, I have to know about this. We've got a pretty amazing audience there in New Zealand. Shout-out to you guys listening.

You spent two months there. What prompted a two month move basically to New Zealand in the first place?

**Katy Bowman:** Well, I got asked to speak at the Ancestral Conference there, and so I've been trying to figure out if I'm going to be doing these long flights. I usually take my family and I usually travel as a unit, and I'll spend a lot of time going without because kids have always been little.

So I thought, 'Well I'm going to go on the other side of the planet basically,' and just to go to speak for an hour didn't really make that much sense, so we said, 'Well let's stack it a little bit, let's see what else.'

We have a lot of teachers in New Zealand, I have a lot of long-time readers in New Zealand, and I took a social media break this last summer for a few months, and part of the strategy of doing that was to kind of go back to how I used to teach before I taught on the World Wide Web, and doing one thing in my house that would reach out to everybody.

It lost a little bit of that connection and really where I am now was built upon. Like there's a backbone of one-on-one instruction and interactions, and those are very rich- community rich, tone rich, hands on rich, like they're very nutritious interactions versus reading a blog post, a little bit less so. Like they're essential information still.

So I've just really thinking about is it always better to do this digital widespread, or do I need to keep also fostering the backbone of you and I have met, we are in an actual relationship.

Because me following someone on Instagram doesn't put us in relationship in a traditional sense. It's the new type of relationship.

So I decided I can actually go and cultivate that backbone in New Zealand, and we have a lot of readers in Australia and New Zealand, and kind of fortify people trying to move more in their life, and we found a school that would allow- had an international kid's program and could drop in for the world's shortest indoor school experiment for our kids that have only had outdoor school, and get a little bit of cross-cultural experience.

And then at the conference that I was speaking on, there was a colleague of mine, Eke Heke who's a Maori kind of counterpart to what I do, only he's working with the Maori and the government there, trying to reframe exercise and movement to not be

like so fitness based, but to be culture based, nature based, the way that it always has been.

And I was fascinated by his work, and so I was like, 'He is someone really kind of embodying the things that I like to learn from, so instead of reading his book, why don't I go and talk, listen in live.'

So it was just easier to take everybody over there. The flight is the same whether you stay there for two weeks or two months, and we had someone come and live kind of our life here who needed that space, and it just worked out, and it was the most challenging thing, and also amazing.

A lot of growth, a lot of pressure to grow in discomfort, foster and facilitate a discomfort.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I love that so much. I mean if we would just kind of be more proactive at putting ourselves in discomfort, because life has a way of smacking you into some, but I feel if you lean into it a little bit, like you're so much more prepared, and you're so much more capable of coming out of that with a lesson because you actually chose kind of consciously to get into it in the first place. You know what I mean?

**Katy Bowman:** Yeah, we set growth as the intention rather than growing without choosing it. Right? You're going to grow no matter what, the pressures are going to be there.

You can either relax into it, prepare, and set your intention, or you can like feel victimized by the situation. And so we just chose the former in this case, and it was great. Because the whole time things were hard, we could frame it as, 'This is exactly what we wanted! This sucks! But look at, we're getting-'

And so we could be just joyful on top of the struggle, which is to me the lesson that I'm here to learn, is how to just be joyful for the life, no matter what the situation was.

So it was just like a two month- I didn't even have to take a class. I didn't even have to take a mindfulness class. I could just live my life and get the lesson, so it was great.

And then of course it's nature, it's barefoot. It's the barefoot haven of the world. It's nature. There's kind of a wilderness that's been preserved within I would say the way people live in cities and towns that we don't see here. So it was kind of interesting to go out.

I just assumed that this was the time, 2017 and the way people were, but then you go to another country and you're like, 'Oh no, this is still a cultural thing. Putting shoes on all the time, cultural thing. So it was great. It was really great.



**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, as soon as you said barefoot capital of the world, I immediately thought about hobbits, and I thought about Smeagol, and I thought about that immediately.

So they filmed a lot of the movie there, right?

**Katy Bowman:** Yeah!

**Shawn Stevenson:** Did you go to any of the sets- the many places where they filmed?

**Katy Bowman:** Well a couple things, Wellington which is where Peter Jackson is from, they call it I've learned Wellywood.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Wellywood.

**Katy Bowman:** And so you would be just kind of tramping along - which is their word for hiking - you'd be tramping along, and then there'd be a sign, it would be, '*Lord of the Rings* filming location just over here.'

But when you're in the Wellington airport, so many of those large models from the movie like Saul with his blinking eye, and Gandolf writing on the large eagles. This is a shout-out to all the LOTR fans out there. Gandolf writing on the back of eagles, those are all installed in the airport.

So you're just like walking through, and there's just these huge eagles everywhere, and then you're looking up and there's a guy like on the back, and it's Gandolf.

And Saul is installed in the airport so the kids can climb and sit on him, and his eyes looking around and opening and closing.

So the kids haven't seen the movies, but they're kind of informed in reverse just because there's a giant Smeagol just on the top of some random building. Or it's Gollum and he's just like telling them the story of the movie as we would go on a six hour hike.

So they've got it in storytelling verbal format now in the place that it was filmed, and then that should change the way that the movie feels maybe later on.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I love it. My nerd heart is just singing right now. I know some people are like, 'What is Smeagol? Eagle?' But yeah, I love that stuff. But wow, what an amazing story, and I can't wait to see- and we've been talking about this a little bit, but with 2018, the things that are going to come from that with you, so I'm very excited.

But one of the first things I want to talk about, you've got obviously a lot of books, and I joked with you before just about like is this just like breathing to you?

But you've got incredible books on topics that aren't covered enough in popular culture, but are really quite pervasive, and one of them being diastasis recti. So let's talk about that for folks that might not know what it is, and let's of course talk about some of the ways to address it.

Because I think there's a lot of misconceptions about it.

**Katy Bowman:** Yeah, so 'Diastasis Recti' is a book with on one hand a terrible title because it's got this like Latin anatomical diagnosis term, and when I was picking the name for the book- so diastasis recti is like technically the Latin is a separation or a distancing of the rectus abdominis.

So if you think of like a six pack, it's that muscle that runs down the center of your abdomen, and it's actually two separate muscles. But they start separating from each other. They're not really ever attached to each other, but they start distancing themselves from each other. There's a facial connection between the two.

One of the misconceptions is that it's a women's issue because you see so much of it during and post pregnancy, because obviously you've got a very large mass coming up behind those muscles, and the forces end up kind of pushing the rectus abdominis apart.

But it actually is a men's issue as well. You see it in a lot of fit lean people who are doing a ton of abdominal work, where if you see a picture of a six pack, you'll see kind of like- it's just like a separation.

You'll see that they're not parallel to each other, that the muscles kind of get a little bit round, especially around the naval- round meaning the distance between them. That shape of the distance is slightly round in the middle.

And then so I was picking the name, like this is a horrible name. Why don't you just call this 'Core Strength'? And I was like well because so many women, almost every woman who gives birth will hear this term, and maybe have it, and there are zero books with the name of that in the title.

So to me it's not an obscure title at all, the obscurity is not just because you don't know what it means. All these people are out there looking for the book that speaks directly to this.

But at the same time, all my books are always whole body, all body books.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Right.

**Katy Bowman:** So in the beginning, I was like, 'This is really my core book. This is my book that talks about the core of the body.'

Diastasis recti is again the issue that I really feel compelled to women's health, because there's not a lot of stuff that's written, especially movement-wise, directly to women that's not about burning fat.

So I wanted to make diastasis recti the cover, but this is also the book if you have a hernia, if you have an inguinal hernia, or an umbilical hernia.

It's a book about pressure. It's a book about intra-abdominal pressure, the tension of your mid-section, how the mid-section moves, and simple adjustments and exercises you can do to make your core very dynamic no matter who you are.

There's a lot of pressure-related ailments of the pelvic floor for men and women, sometimes you can have prostate pressure, loads to the prostate. For women, that same downward pressure can become an organ prolapse.

And so it's just a book that speaks to, again same as 'Whole Body Barefoot,' here's what your core would have done throughout a human timeline. It doesn't do very much now, and so we've kind of created this hyper- here's the exercises to fill in some of the blanks, but they're really linear and they're not very- they don't really correlate well to the larger motions.

You know, doing 100 or 200 of just like crunching forward and back, it's like but you just did that for twelve hours in your chair, and I would argue that the fact that you're sitting kind of in a flexed spine in your chair, you already overdosed on abdominal flexion, and that there needs to be these other pieces brought in, and just a little bit more robust explanation about how your core works in conjunction with your thoracic cavity and your pelvic cavity right?

So you've got breathing, that's affecting your core, and then you've got how you hold your diaphragm, and maybe you suck your stomach in all day or keep it tense, which is sometimes a recommendation for back stabilization because it's the easiest thing to do when you don't have a strong spine.

And then how all of that starts affecting the pelvic floor, which is another major issue for people.

So it was just kind of connecting the dots, but all around this idea of too much pressure. There's certainly always pressure in the abdomen, but you get too much and then high pressure in the abdomen starts pushing organs and things around, and there are lots of health conditions around that. So that's what 'Diastasis Recti' is about.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I love this. There's a couple things to unpack. Number one, it just brings to bear how we're basically trying to simulate normal activity when we go to a gym, or we're doing ab exercises, or things like that, but they don't really correlate to natural living.

So number one, be mindful of that. I'm not saying don't do crunches, but just be mindful that what we really are looking for is I guess 'normal' movement patterns for human beings.

And the other thing is you have a great example, and pictures in your book too, relating an orange to- the peeling of the orange to the human body. I was like, 'Holy crap, it's so similar, it's weird.' Can you talk a little bit about that?

**Katy Bowman:** Well the orange is- it's access to basically dissection that most people don't have. You know, we often talk about our abs. Like if you get a fitness magazine, it'll just have a picture of the ab muscle.

Like it doesn't say what's on them, between them, over them, inside of them. So I just- walking through an orange, it's like here's this rind if you will, but then when you kind of peel it away, you'll see that there's a slight connection between the rind and what we consider the fruit of the orange inside.

But then if you look at the whole orange, you'll see that it's just smaller segments all connected in a very minute way. You could easily just separate them, but they are all connected through this fibrous kind of growth, and then you pull out- separate all the segments, and then you're left with one segment of an orange.

But then you'll see like, 'Well that's just the skin around a bunch of smaller cells,' and then you open that up, and then you see that the juice from an orange is really just held in these individual juice cells, and that you could actually dissect and get a whole bunch of juice cells.

So when you're looking at the whole orange, and then you're looking at the segments but connected, and then you're looking at individual segments, and then you're looking at that there's tissue wrapped around the individual packets of cells, it's all an orange, you know? But it all works together.

So sometimes we pull out a little small segment of juice, and we think we're talking about the body when we're talking about that tiny cell. And sometimes we think we're talking about the body when we talk about one segment of the orange.

And then I also add this other piece that there's also invisible anatomy to the orange, and that's what my work is mostly about, the forces that are in the body.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah.

**Katy Bowman:** But you can't really get a sense of forces if you just take one of those orange slices, you'll see that it's not only the anatomical wrapper, but that wrapper intact places a certain amount of pressure on the juice cells. And if you puncture it you see them all kind of like open up a little bit.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Right.

**Katy Bowman:** And so that pressure is part of the anatomy. The orange stops being the orange that it was once you start digging into some of those wrappings around other pieces.

So when you have something like diastasis recti or a hernia, there's an issue with forces, it's not just anatomy. You've popped it open for some reason, and so our inclination is often just go sew it back up.

But a lot of times, people will be searching for sewing things up, and fixing hernias, and meanwhile they're still continuously popping the hole in it because they haven't understood the forces that they're bringing to their anatomy through their behavior.

So I'm always trying to help people learn their forces, and let the anatomy adjust to the forces, not just keep the same forces, and then just keep kind of endlessly tirelessly feeling like, 'Why isn't this working?'

They're shaping their body in one way, and then they're trying to fix it externally. I'm like, 'Let's go deeper in the anatomy, and let's go to the invisible anatomy if you will.'

So the oranges I think is the easiest way for anyone to get that lesson. Like your kids can get that lesson, and if you do it together it's like, 'Alright, I know this. I intuitively understand this. It's just those words are not put into the content written on the abdominals.'

And so I just write it in- like a nerd, I'll write it in, but when you're done, you know. Right? And so I find that to be valuable.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, oh my goodness. When you gave me the example, it all came together immediately just with the orange example, and how- because using the term 'forces' isn't something you normally hear in the context of anatomy, or for science period a lot of times.

And if you think about it, even puncturing that orange, there's a force that's pushing- like that's already- like even the skin around the orange. If you peel it, I'm sure the orange expands, right?

**Katy Bowman:** Sure.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Because there's forces that are trying to push it out of its casing for some reason, you know? But do we know what that is? No, the same thing with us, with our bodies.

But there is something behind the scenes that's creating this altered force, unnatural force maybe if you want to call it that, but your body is just doing what it's designed to do, which is to adapt.

**Katy Bowman:** Yeah.

**Shawn Stevenson:** So I want to talk about some solutions to this, you know? I know that this is a huge topic obviously, but you go through so many different pieces in the book, and it's not what people would expect.

Like again, doing more ab exercises, it's other things. So let's talk about what some of those other things are.

**Katy Bowman:** Well it's interesting, so if you get a diagnosis for a hernia or diastasis recti, you're usually taken off of core exercises. But at the same time, like you need a strong mid-section to deal with this. It's just the pursuit of strength is in a different way.

So a lot of times, people will come to the book and they'll be like, 'There's exercises here. I was told I'm not supposed to move my core.' And I was like, 'Well I think it's because the way people understand movement of the core is pretty much planks, crunches, medicine ball throws, very high pressure movements, because we're not used to thinking of movement outside of that exercise role.'

So one of the things that I think is different about this book for your core is that you're starting with your shoulders, the tension that's in your shoulders.

And so for a lot of high intra-abdominal pressure, whether it's a hernia, or whether it's diastasis recti, or whether it's just you've been trying to get your core musculature in better shape, to get it stronger, to get it more dynamic, I'll have people start with looking at the tension of their shoulders because when you have a particular tension- and imagine putting your hands out on your keyboard or on the steering wheel of your car.

You're in that position with your upper body ribcage and trunk probably more than any other position. Just like the butt chair hip thing, for most people their arms slightly in front of them, rounded, forward, like that is the chair position of the upper body.

And so when you've adapted to that, when you go to stand up, you tend to like flare your ribcage a little bit on the bottom, which then pulls on your midsection.

So we start with, 'Let me show you how to stabilize your ribcage so that you don't cheat and think that your chest is looser than it is.'

And then you're going to put your arms behind you and overhead, and you're going to start to see like, 'Wow my shoulders are so tight, they're throwing my abs under the bus like when I go to move around.'

So I separate those two pieces first. So learning where your ribcage sits in neutral, that's the first step. So like if anyone is listening at home, if you stand up and back your hips up over your heels, you want to drop the bottom of the front of the ribs.

If you put your fingers up around your ribcage, they stick out a little bit there, you want to drop that down until it sits just above the front of the pelvis. So if you think of your abdominal wall, it's sitting in a vertical line, not angled out where your ribs are out in front of you or you're kind of stretching the top of your abdomen forward relative to the bottom of your abdomen.

So that's like the first exercise. I mean there's nothing really even to it, except you're standing around, get your ribs down. Like you'll see the words 'ribs down,' I should probably count how many times it's in the book, it's a lot.

So you get your ribs down and then you start to learn how to move your shoulders so that your shoulders aren't continuously pulling on your abdomen. That's one or two—that might actually be three.

**Shawn Stevenson:** When you mentioned it, I saw my producer Shoe over here, he straightened his shoulders back in the chair.

**Katy Bowman:** I could see you looking, I could see you checking him out.

**Shawn Stevenson:** He was like, 'Oh, wait a minute.' Because he's typing, you know he's at the computer or whatever, he's like, 'Wait a minute. What's my body doing?'

Because it's very unconscious, you know?

**Katy Bowman:** Well how else are you supposed to use a computer? I had film and videos before, and there's like a three person crew, and I'm on some stage on some rock in Colorado talking about feet and hips, and I can see the camera persons adjust their posture as they're doing their job, you know?

Here you are leaning, and they're like, 'Oh.' Like you see them fix their feet. And this stuff is so powerful, you just have to have a little awareness, and then you just start clueing into like, 'Wow I have control over where my body is. I didn't even know.'

**Shawn Stevenson:** In the book you've got - and I love this - little moves, medium moves, and big moves. You had a whole section for the drop your ribs.

**Katy Bowman:** A whole chapter.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Let's talk about those three categories, because I know- and when I went through, I actually went through and looked at the big moves first.

**Katy Bowman:** Sure, of course you did.

**Shawn Stevenson:** This is interesting, and many of these things- like some of them I did when I had this sciatic kind of issue because of my SI joint, right? This kind of SI joint dysfunction, and I saw some of the exercises like literally just fixed it within a day or two.

**Katy Bowman:** Totally.

**Shawn Stevenson:** So let's talk about what those are.

**Katy Bowman:** Well so I think that again, because we think exercise and not movement, if I'm going to fix my core, like I want the twenty pounds, carrying thirty, I'm looking for the squat that takes me all the way down and up, I'm looking to- you just assume that the exercises will be large.

But what happens is we are going to these larger movements, and we're doing them with a body that doesn't even have working smaller parts.

So when you do the larger movements, they're not moving all of you. They're not moving the parts of you that those larger movements are intended to move.

So I think of it like writing, you know? Like I have little kids, and it's really interesting to watch them write because first they just kind of emulate- like they're trying to figure out how to hold their hands to draw, and you start with the alphabet, and then you do small words, and then you go on to grammar and sentence structure, and then you go on to creative writing, right? Writing a story, something very practical.

Most people, when they are learning how to move, they jump right to creative writing, and mechanically the way it looks when I watch them move, it's like, 'You've written an entire story, but you have left out all of the commas, the letter Es, the Ms are all missing.'

And so what happens is your communication isn't what you think it is because you didn't have the entire alphabet to work with.

And so small moves are you- me going and saying, 'For these larger moves, you need to know this alphabet because this larger move can actually make your condition worse if you don't know how to write the letter M.'



And the letter M is going to be when my ribcage is here, my elbows are here. So when you pick something up and push it over your head, your elbow better not be over here, or else you lifting it over your head is actually creating a set of forces that is making your problem worse.

And so exercise as a solution often is contraindicated because no one is taking the time to fill in the small moves, they're just going to the large moves, right?

It's in a magazine, it's the large moves. If it's in an exercise book with thirty exercises, it's the large moves.

So the small moves are like the alphabet, things that you can just put into your daily life, they're changing how you sit and stand.

And then the medium moves are things are a little bit bigger now, you're definitely going to be calling on some of those letters but they're going to be more challenging.

And then you get to the larger strength moves at the end, as well as a lot of habits, right? Like everything is with this- you can't solve something that you created moving a certain way in a whole day, a whole month, a whole life with fifteen minutes or twenty minutes of exercise.

You're going to have to change how you move throughout the day, throughout the month, throughout the life, and here are some strategies on how to do that.

**Shawn Stevenson:** With the medium moves, I just want to touch on a couple of them real quick. You've got sit near the front of your chair, which I want to definitely talk about that.

But then I saw some things like, 'You know what? I really enjoy when I do these things, and I don't do them enough. Like swinging, right? Hanging and swinging.'

And I actually try to get my hang on at least once a day, and you also have another one in here, ball in the guts. Alright? Ball in the guts.

**Katy Bowman:** Yeah.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Which I actually talk about in my book, 'Sleep Smarter.' So let's talk really quickly about sit near the front of your chair, and when is that appropriate.

**Katy Bowman:** Sit near the front of your chair is like the easiest core strength program ever.

So I know we talked about I think in don't just sit there, too. So everyone's like, 'Okay but I have to work eight hours a day, I don't have time for core exercises.'

It's like, 'Dude, just scoot forward to the front of your chair.' As soon as you- is he doing it? Did you look over there to see if he was doing it?

**Shawn Stevenson:** He was already doing it. He was doing this one beforehand. Good job, Shoe.

**Katy Bowman:** Exactly. If you just scoot forward to the front of your chair, what you're going to do is use your torso muscles more to hold up the weight of the torso versus outsource them to the chair.

Like if you cut away the back of your chair that you're sitting in, and you fall backwards, you were letting the chair hold you up. So you can just scoot forward, and boom, you've got eight hours of core exercises that you can fit in without having to stop work, get a gym membership, or anything else like that.

And then you know, you can start bringing in some of the smaller moves to the medium moves, like okay now that you're sitting on the front of your chair, where's your pelvis?

Is it tucked way under or tipping way forward? You can go ahead and find that neutral position.

Where's your ribcage? Are they lifting way out in front of you? So you're going to go ahead and drop that down.

Now you not sitting on the front of the chair is not only more movement, you've created a set of forces that are therapeutic specific to the issue that you're working on right now, which is less chronically high intra-abdominal pressure, better spinal stabilization, better recruitment of those muscles.

So yeah, I mean technically that should even be a small one, but we've got something before just sitting in a chair.

I mean just sitting in a chair is an exercise now, which is great, right? Like it's then very practical, I think.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah. So let's talk about why it's a good idea to get our hang on. Just to maybe grab a pull-up bar, or a branch or something, and hang.

**Katy Bowman:** So many reasons. I mean you've probably been following- so there's a relationship to grip strength and all-cause mortality. Why that is, is not really clear.

I would assume that probably has something to do with the people who have better grip strengths are moving a lot through their regular life. You know, they're actually picking up things, and moving heavy things around, doing like repetitive motions with their arms.

So when they tested that population, they found essentially that there was better grip strength in people who move more, and that's why.

And then alongside that, there is this decline in grip strength where the millennials now have less grip strength than their counterpart in the eighties.

Okay so it's related to all-time mortality, and it's going down within our culture. So hanging is one of those things where your grip strength has to match your mass, which is a simple easy way to start training everything from your skin on your hands, to every finger segment, to all the-

I mean we're so used to picking up a kettlebell and saying, 'Okay my shoulder is carrying thirty pounds,' or whatever is on the end of it, and swinging it around. And so you're testing- the kettlebell is pulling on your fingers, your fingers are pulling on your wrists, the wrist is pulling on the lower arm, which is pulling on the elbow, which is pulling on the upper arm, which is pulling on the shoulder, which is pulling on the ribcage, right? So you've got that.

When you're hanging, you become the kettlebell. So your anatomy has evolved to you hanging from your own arms, you know?

So that means that as far as the mass and the geometry of your musculature, the capacity for movement in this part is to not hold something thirty pounds in your hands, but to anchor your hand and carry 100 to 250 pounds from that hand, which means your fingertips have the capacity to carry your full bodyweight, not just the weight of a kettlebell.

So we're just training very small. Now that's all one general fitness. So a lot of the work that I do, you'll see it's like on pelvic floor, diastasis recti, core strength, hip strength, SI joint.

When you hang, the ultimate mass that's participating is- I guess what's the easiest way to explain that, your latissimus, your lats, those muscles are connecting pelvis to shoulder.

So when you hang, it is one of the best ways to put a nice strong load on the SI joint to pulling where it moves freely, and it's really the only thing that you've got to move your SI joint.

You've got your butt, and you've got your latissimus. Your glutes and your latissimus, and we don't walk that much and we don't hang that much, so basically your sacrum, which is also your pelvic floor, because the tip of your sacrum, your tailbone is going to go across and be the other attachment point for the pelvic floor.

Your pelvic floor tension, which is very much related to the strength capabilities of your pelvic floor, are dependent on two movements that have been almost extinct in our culture; walking and hanging.

And so the hanging is such an easy way to put a gentle load. It takes a long time though to get your shoulders strong enough to be able to do, et cetera, but it's worth it because it might be one of the sole movers of the pelvic floor. You know, not balancers, stabilizers.

And so we've got all these people suffering from pelvic floor, and they're like sitting there trying to work just the pelvic floor, and it's like, 'Your lats and your shoulders is part of the ecology of how your pelvic floor works. Get a hanging bar. Go out to a branch. You will not be sorry.'

It's such a great way to create traction forces, decompression forces. You don't need to go to a fancy center and lay in a chamber. Just find the nearest branch and go for it.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yes, I love it! I love it. So for also for our psychology for folks, if it's just like, 'I don't want to just hang,' human kettlebell. It's been said here today, I want you to go do some human kettlebell every day.

You know, at least- just again, something you work up to because it could even be kind of uncomfortable, especially if your body is kind of wired up and sticky.

**Katy Bowman:** Oh, for sure.

**Shawn Stevenson:** But it's one of those things, again humans evolved definitely hanging and climbing on things on a regular basis. You know, and so today we're replicating that.

And I love the element of like we don't need fancy equipment to do this, just find something, go, grab, and hang out.

And I want to talk a little bit about this other one, which is ball in the guts, alright? Ball in the guts. What in the world does that mean?

**Katy Bowman:** Well that's from my friend Jill Miller of Yoga Tune-Up who creates these balls. So they're soft and they- it's hard- have you ever gone from- I've started like five sentences with the balls.

Okay so you know, you go to a massage, and most times they start with your neck, and head, and shoulders, and arms, and legs, and hips, and you don't get a lot of abdominal action.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah.

**Katy Bowman:** You've got this like super dense network, but there's not a lot of movement going on in the abdomen; not a lot of complex movements.

I mean one of the crazy things about going to New Zealand, is we had to be in some rental cars, and they have back-up cameras, and I was like, 'Well there goes the last twist, the last natural twist.'

Like twists are almost extinct. If you're not doing them in a gym on purpose, there's very little in our lives that require a twist.

And so when you twist, just think of like the wringing out or the motion that happens across the grain of those straight up and down muscles.

Like the muscles are straight up and down, but that doesn't mean that they shouldn't be subject to you moving in all different planes, because that's part of what keeps them supple.

They might not be firing when you twist your rectus abdominis, but when you twist, the rectus abdominis is essentially moved passively like a massage.

So we've got none of this really deep regular complex diverse movements. So you get on a ball and it's just like vacuuming out cobwebby old- it's like a junk drawer in there.

And so you start- you just kind of start moving them, and you just- it's very controlled pressure and movement, because a lot of times if you have diastasis recti or a hernia, you don't want to create a lot of high pressure in a random way.

But if you can control it, if you can get this soft ball and lie on it essentially so it's gently pressing into the outside of your abdomen, and you just slowly work your body on it, that ball is doing the same motion that you doing like a dynamic twist would do.

Maybe your muscles aren't ready for a dynamic twist, but they can get some of that movement. Like you're moving your DNA in just these areas now, you're taking sedentary areas and making them less sedentary by doing this controlled work.

And it just makes for a much more supple torso, and it's a great part of- with diastasis recti again, and even people again who are having hard times connecting with their abdomen, just general lack of strength.

It moves you in a way that makes those muscles available to you more, and we tend to hold a lot of tension in that area, especially when we're weak, so it's just a way of getting that tension out. No massage therapist required, you can do it yourself, you can stay shy of areas that you feel uncomfortable and just kind of work into them a little bit, or not at all and stay on the edge.

So just again, it puts you in authority of moving this area new, and the ball is like a personal trainer that you're allowed to lie on, or a massage therapist that you're allowed to direct, but it takes out that relationship so you can do it yourself.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, oh my goodness. You know, I learned about this from Kelly Starrett, who learned about it from Jill, and it's basically- what I did, I just went to- I don't know, maybe it was Target or something, and got one of those little like balls from like the random ball bin.

They're kind of soft, like the characters from *Frozen* are on it. I got one with Spiderman on it. You know, and so it's basically you just put the ball on the floor, get down, and lay on top of it with it right into your belly, and move around.

And the reason that he talked about it with me was the vagus nerve, and this kind of like- the fact that we're always- like we can go zero to a hundred real quick, right? There's even songs about it.

But can you go one hundred to zero? Can you go back down and shut down as fast as you can turn on, which for a lot of us, we have issues with that.

And so kind of getting in there, and getting in that parasympathetic- because there's like a switch there. The vagus nerve sends information every microsecond from your gut to your brain, you know?

And if there's tension there, it's communicating tension. We tend to hold a lot of tension in that area, you know?

And so I've really found that unwinding, for a lot of folks doing that in the evening really helps them to kind of shut down that kind of fight or flight sympathetic, relax a little bit.

A massage is great, but certain parts of your body really tend to hold some really interesting- like I'm thinking like Bugs Bunny with those big switches that can help to turn on new programs, you know?

So I'm so glad you put that into the book, it's really cool.

And by the way, also there's the big movements, there are so many cool things in this book, and I agree the name could have been misleading, but the fact that people are having babies every second, you know, it's like it's going to get more eyeballs to that.

But also I'm so glad you started the show saying this isn't just a female issue, this is a human issue. And so definitely guys, this is one of those books to definitely have in your library.

I want to shift gears now and I asked you about this before the show because I had a feeling like, I was like, 'Somebody in your family made a makeshift one of these.'

And whether you guys start off using- like for us, instead of a Squatty Potty, we were using a cooler. Alright? My son went- he was seven at the time, and I was like, 'What are you doing, man?' He was like, 'You know, when you were just listening to that lecture, we should use this when we go poop, right?'

And so putting your foot up on some type of elevation surface to put you in a normal position.

So why is that important in your mind? Because again, I think this goes back to forces and unnatural things happening when we're not in the right position.

**Katy Bowman:** Yeah we don't think of our body as something that is position dependent, but frankly inside of your body, your tubes and there are so many like flaps, and levers and things within your body, it's very much- it's very similar to a machine in that way, that work when aligned to gravity in a particular way.

So when you change the environment radically- for example humans have always squatted to poop throughout the human timeline, and then within this very short period of time we went from doing it in a deep squat, deep hip flexion, tailbone in a particular orientation, to doing it at ninety degrees where there is no hip flexion.

And so they've just found that there are pressures and alignments that are created that are relaxing to certain structures so that you don't have to sit there and like add a force, which is like if you're grunting and straining, that's you adding force.

That's an indication that the flaps aren't opening and closing on their own, that you had to bring something else from the table. And then of course when you bear down, all of your pressure increases everywhere through your cardiovascular system, through your pelvic floor.

Like you don't get to spot treat pressure, it's like a whole body phenomenon. So the Squatty Potty is this- it's so funny, like it seems like this- it's just for anyone who's camped, it's just going on the ground.

But you have a toilet that has a shape that needs to then be retrofitted a little bit, so yes when it first came out probably seven years ago, it was the same thing right when I was pregnant. I was like, 'This doesn't feel good.'

You know, you get hemorrhoids, and you get all these like pressure related things, and I was like, 'What's happening mechanically? Oh yes, of course, like I'm straining on top of already straining because I've got twenty extra pounds inside my midsection.'

My husband made me a Squatty Potty- my husband made me a squat platform, a DIY platform, and we added it. And then Squatty Potty the brand came on the market with a much more attractive solution than this kind of heap of plywood that I had which was very cumbersome.

And I think when other people came over, like they'd have to kind of step around it, and I was like, 'Well this isn't creating-'

**Shawn Stevenson:** Better than the cooler, alright? People come in our bathroom like, 'Do you guys have a drinking problem? You have to drink when you go poop?' Or maybe it's green juice. It's just very strange to have a cooler in the bathroom, so I agree.

**Katy Bowman:** I went to visit my aunt a year ago, and she had two like Yuban coffee tins sitting at the base of her toilet. And so people will send me- like they're creating.

My husband, and I put this out on my last newsletter, he was in a public bathroom, and once you use it for a long time, you need that flexion, right?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah.

**Katy Bowman:** He had to take the trash can in the public toilet down on its side and push it to the toilet to be able to go, and he just took a picture of it, because this is the age that we live in. You've got to put it on Instagram.

He just took a picture of the set-up, and it was like, 'This is my shout-out to Squatty Potty.'

And why Squatty Potty invented a travel Squatty Potty, because once you're adapted to that, you don't want to sit and add a bunch of pressure like you've done for the last 25 years, because you realize it doesn't feel good.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Right, yeah.

**Katy Bowman:** It doesn't feel good to add the pressure. And who's got the time to sit on the toilet for twelve minutes waiting for this thing to go up and down and around, when it could just streamline it and get done, get out of there.

Get out of there! You've got better stuff to do.

**Shawn Stevenson:** In our culture, this is like I remember going to people's houses, and you see the magazine rack, and just like, 'How much time are you in there?'

And this is part of the reason why, you know?



**Katy Bowman:** The couch.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Right! Like and I've never said this before out loud, when I was a kid, I was probably- I don't know, when I can remember doing this I was probably seven years old, but I would take my little brother into the bathroom with me when I had to go poop, and I'd put him under the cabinet, and like we would have conversations.

You know, like we'd talk about- we'd go back and forth picking like who our favorite superhero is, or some random thing.

But whenever I'd go poop I was like, 'Hey Daryl, come on. I've got to go.' You know? Because I was going to be in there for awhile, you know?

**Katy Bowman:** It's boring.

**Shawn Stevenson:** We've been led to believe that that's normal, that we have to like- it's a job, you know? When it's just something that is- and by the way, this is why the Squatty Potty, we've talked about this before, they've normalized- they're normalizing having a flat surface to put your feet up onto to get elevated, to get you in more of a squat position, because they look cool, and they can just slide right under your already existing toilet.

So everybody listen, seriously it's one of the best things you could do. And like she said, it's really difficult to go back, because you know like- I tell people it's like there's life before Squatty Potty, and there's life after.

And they are such an amazing company, and they happened to reach out because of the work that we're doing, and they wanted to offer everybody 15% off all of their Squatty Potties.

And they've even got ones for kids now, I think it's like a SquattyPottymus or something. And the travel Squatty, I have to have that, I have that of course and bring it with me when I travel.

15% off plus free shipping. Go to [www.SquattyPotty.com/model](http://www.SquattyPotty.com/model), alright? So that's [www.SquattyPotty.com/model](http://www.SquattyPotty.com/model), 15% off. Do yourself a favor, thank me later, alright?

So let's talk about- oh just one more quick note there, you already mentioned hemorrhoids, diverticulosis as a result of trying to poop in a conventional toilet.

Prolapse, and I want to talk a little bit about that, just like organs shifting out of place, incomplete elimination, constipation, all those things can be solved.

So in your book, I mean I've seen this consistently in different books, this- can you talk about prolapse really quickly? Like what is that? What does this have to do with the pelvic floor? Let's talk a little bit about it.

**Katy Bowman:** Well the female pelvic floor is different than the male pelvic floor because there's an actual hole in it that opens to the outside world. So women have that difference from men.

Both men and women have pelvic floor and still have pelvic floor issues, high pressure, high tension, but women have this anatomical difference where there's a hole, so it's just shaped differently.

Organ prolapse is when your pelvic organs come outside, exit out the vagina, and are out. Sometimes they can just move down, but they can move out, and it's just- it's one of those things that I think the first time I ever heard of it, it was just like, 'Oh gross.'

Like you couldn't imagine it happening, but- and first of all, I think it's fabulous that we're talking about it right now on your show because it's just something that anyone who's experienced it needs to have the comfort to be able to talk about, and needs to be able to talk about it with their spouses.

It needs to not be sitting in the bathroom going, 'Oh my God, my organs are out.' Like you can feel them. Like they're not dangling out down twelve inches, but they move down a little bit.

Usually- I mean, and you could even put your fingers there and you're like, 'Wow, something has moved down and out.'

It is something that after you've had a baby, when things have- when you've created a lot of downward pressures, they get a little bit more supple, you just have to reach and push them back up a little bit.

And when you're hearing it, if you can decondition the, 'Oh that's disgusting.' It's really not, it's just Jenga. It's just pieces being less supported and moving down, and if someone else talks about it, to be really supportive about it, and to not- like it's just something that almost everyone- you know someone who's dealing with it. You probably know multiple people who are dealing with it.

So it's just- it is just that. There are different treatments for it that involve mesh. You know, it's not that different than a hernia, but a hernia is your insides, your abdominal organ viscera poking outside of the barrier of your muscular wall.

It's like a hernia except it's the organs, and they've dropped outside the muscular boundaries of your body. So if you have a hernia, you're usually used to pushing it back in, or like trying to move some way to pull it back in.

Those who have prolapsing organs are doing the same thing, they're moving in some way to bring it back in, and then from that point trying to avoid things that push them out.

So for a lot of people, straining on the toilet is something that moves them down.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Forces.

**Katy Bowman:** So the Squatty Potty- it the forces again, it's just pressures. So there's that perspective, which is one, well then don't do things that push them out.

Two, get a physical barrier, mesh to hold them up. Pelvic floor mesh is problematic in that there's a lot of side effects to it.

New Zealand just banned it because they didn't feel it was safe and there was too many side effects, and they removed it to some controversy because like to medical professionals like, 'Well then we have nothing else to offer these women if we don't allow this kind of questionable mesh to go in.'

So there's those two philosophies which is don't do the things that push it out, two, create a physical barrier. Or there's my option which is learn your forces, improve the densities and distributions of your muscles, and learn to keep moving in a way that doesn't create forces that pushes things out.

So I'm always cheering for three, because I feel like again it gives every person that movement freedom, sovereignty, it keeps them- like stopping movement is just not a great long-term solution, you know what I mean?

Nor is feeling like you can't enjoy your life because if you want to go to the trampoline park with your kids, you're going to have to deal with your organs coming out, or peeing your pants, or whatever.

You know, like I really want people to have the joyful living experiences that are not exercise based, you know? Like wrestling, or running around, or even having intimate relationships and feeling like okay about it. I think you can get that through movement.

Like through movement, and through managing your forces, and you don't have to have the surgery necessarily that comes with maybe questionable side effects, nor do you have to stop moving. You know? Like there are other options sometimes.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Oh yeah, and we all need to go and go to the trampoline park. And I don't know if you've seen the ones that have dodgeball there, but it can get crazy. Some of these kids, I mean it's like so competitive.

When you get a ball in your hand, a dodgeball, and you're jumping around on all these different trampolines and stuff, it's just like- and the look in people's eyes. I know I do it too. I turn into the guy from *Dodgeball* the movie probably.

'No one makes me bleed my own blood.' You know?

And anyways, but all of this stuff makes so much sense, and this is why again I encourage everybody to pick up 'Diastasis Recti' and also 'Move Your DNA.' Classic essential book, bestselling book, definitely want to have your hands on that one.

I want to talk about- this is something- I don't know if I'm the first person to say this, but I know that I'm the first person in my consciousness to say it, but I call it the 'Dreadmill.' Alright? The 'Dreadmill.'

People are logging in, putting those hours in, the Cardio Confessional, but of course it's a tool, you know? It's like I've used a treadmill, I've used one not too long ago, you know?

It can be helpful in certain instances for certain things, you know? Even just giving your body a different exposure, you know? But living life on the treadmill, alright? Like that's your sole form of exercise, or something you really lean on. What do we need to be aware of?

Because I know that it takes out a part of our gait or our movement pattern. Is that right? Can you talk about the treadmill?

**Katy Bowman:** Yeah, well the treadmill- you know the treadmill was really a tool created for people who were unable to walk unassisted. You know, like people who had had a stroke. Who movement was part of the therapy, but they needed a lot of extra safety for it.

So it made sense in this choice where you don't walk at all, or you walk here. But then of course it became a way of you being able to go in and get movement without having to walk anywhere. Like you could take up such a small space, and kind of zone out.

And so yes, you get the benefits. Like the benefits of moving versus not moving to me are not really even open for debate of course, and I've had to use a treadmill when I know movement will bring me calm, when I need to move those cells around, but it's in a time where like I flew into a hotel, and there's a fire out, and the air quality is really low, and I only have thirty minutes, and I don't have time to go anywhere.

Like there's times when you use them. What you want to check in with is if it's just your way of walking the earth, it's your way of getting this thing called movement in, is in this scenario things to know about it are to recognize that the way you walk on a treadmill is kind of the opposite to how you would walk over ground.

So when you're on fixed ground, there is a set of forces that you create that moves you forward. It's like being in a rowboat; you've got to put your oar in, and push it back. Put your oar in, and push it back.

Those are the forces on this planet that move you in a particular way. The treadmill is bringing its own set of forces to the table.

You get on a treadmill, and the first initiating movement force is that the treadmill starts to go backwards, so then you are forced to lift up and catch up with the belt.

So you're not dipping your oar in and pushing it backwards, you're lifting your oar up like the water- you're in a stream basically that's pushing you back, and you're having to paddle in a different way to keep up with it.

So because forces matter, when we're talking about things like how our body is used to natural movements, certain movements, that the densities of the muscles, the shapes of the muscles themselves are kind of indicators to how a body has moved for a long period of time.

Treadmill walking doesn't get you the same nutrients as over ground walking. So we're talking again about the butt, the backside, that dipping your oar and the paddle and pushing it back behind you, that is one way of developing that butt that eventually stabilizes the sacrum and the pelvic floor. You miss that on a treadmill.

So if you've been having issues in the SI joint, in the hips, or the pelvic floor, or your torso, and your sole way of moving is creating these forces instead of these other more natural forces, then that's a good time for you to go, 'Okay well then I need to figure out a solution to get walking that's not on this treadmill.'

And then you evaluate is it a safety issue? Is it a time issue? And you figure out what the issues actually are, and then you solve for that particular set of issues.

When I use a treadmill, I will take my treadmill time uphill where the set of forces aren't that different any longer. Like it reduces the unnaturalness of the treadmill, like the more you crank up that incline.

So if you find yourself like, 'Man, I've got to work out, I've got to do something, all there is, is this treadmill right here,' then set it up high and go for an uphill hike, right?

It's not- it's still not exactly the same as a real uphill hike, but at least it changes the way you use your body. The amount of hip flexion that a treadmill requires is very high. Same tension, you sitting in a chair, that same tension is utilized on a treadmill.

So if you're like, 'Man my psoas, like they never get relaxed. Hip flexors are always so tight.' You might be taking your exercise in a way that's promoting more tension,

so if you walk uphill, you'll mix that up a little bit. So that's my solution for getting off of it a little bit, but if you can't get off of it, a way to change its use a little bit so you're getting a little bit more diverse movement experience.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I love it, I love it. And I know that there are people listening right now that you're on the treadmill, and I'm with you, I'm walking with you, I'm jogging with you.

**Katy Bowman:** That's good. Congratulations, you're moving.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yes exactly, that's the number one thing is like movement matters. That's the top rung, so just keep that in mind, it's just adding these other pieces of data in because certain things we do, we never think about the origin of these things, you know?

Again the treadmill is a relatively new invention in human movement, you know? And like she said, this started off- it started off as a contraption for folks who were already kind of in a bad spot.

**Katy Bowman:** Immobile.

**Shawn Stevenson:** You know?

**Katy Bowman:** Right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** And so it's just like if that's not your issue, you might want to consider getting some more, as Katy says, nutrition movement out in the world, right? If we can, and maybe use the treadmill as a supplement, or supplement the treadmill activity with other things. You know? Like getting some more natural movement.

**Katy Bowman:** Or you know, if you look at the treadmill and if what you like about it is, 'I live in a place where it's a frozen tundra the rest of the time, and I can't get the walk- I love walking.'

Then look for places with indoor tracks, you know? Like there could be a solution that's just a little bit further away. You can still have the indoorness, you can still have the gym experience, you can still have the safety and the warmth, whatever else you want, but maybe it can be done in a slightly different way.

Like I would pick a track- an indoor track over a treadmill, and still enjoy all the benefits of the rest of the gym or facilitated experience.

So just think big. Think that there's a solution out there, you just haven't stumbled upon it yet, not that there are no solutions.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yes. You know what? I'm going to ask you about one more topic, and we'll put your past episodes in the show notes, and I'll highlight the particular one where you talk more about this, but you know this is an important reminder for a lot of folks, and also there are a lot of new folks listening to the show.

So I want to talk about shoes, alright? And if people want to get even more into it, again I'll put this in the show notes. But this is a subject that you've been sharing a lot of content around, and I want to know how can shoes we wear- specifically how can the shoes we wear be creating health problems for us?

Because it's doesn't make sense. Like it doesn't seem very kind of top of mind for us, so let's just touch on how shoes can be creating health problems elsewhere.

**Katy Bowman:** Well it goes back to the forces. You know all I do- I'm like *Star Wars* here. All I have to offer is the force.

So a heel on a regular shoe- like there's a lot of different features with shoes. Like there's the stiffness of their soles, there's the fact that a lot of them have a slight heel in the back, or you might be wearing a big heel on the back.

In the end, what those do is they change your geometry, and when you change your geometry, you change the way you are loading and pressing on parts of your body with other parts of your body.

You change your pressures, you change your forces, and so many ailments relate back to pressure and forces. We just don't think of it that way.

We think of the shape of the orange as it looks without thinking of all those invisible parts of the orange that are there. So you know, if you have a heeled shoe, then it means that the weight of your foot's shifted forward to the front of your foot. So then you have people who will say, 'Well I can't walk. I would love to walk, but I can't walk because I've got a neuroma on the front of my foot, or I've got planters fasciitis.'

Not really recognizing that these are constates of tissues created by how you have loaded them historically over a period of time.

So when you start playing with the angles of your body- like if you go to therapy, physiotherapy, or physical therapy, you get these exercises that in one way you could think of it as like, 'Oh they're moving this, they're stretching this out, I'm strengthening or adding muscle mass here.'

And that's all true, but what the result of those stretching and strength redistributions do is change your forces. They change the way you're moving around.

So your shoes are creating an environment. If you've been wearing- even if it's this like some regular training shoe, not a high heel, a sports fitness shoe, probably got

an inch heel back there, which means that you've been walking kind of slightly downhill.

Like if you put your hand out and give it an inch out, look at that downhill slope, you might have been walking downhill for the last 35 years. How do you expect your knees to feel after walking downhill for 35 years?

So you just go, 'Okay I recognize the geometry is changing the orientation of those tubes, and hoses, and small orange juice cells.' It's changing the loads and pressures on those, and a shoe is something that you basically put on your whole body.

Yes you put it on your foot, but it adjusts everything north of the sole of that shoe, which means you could be operating the machine of your body just slightly askance for decades, and it's repetitive.

It's like a repetitive use injury. Like there's nothing wrong with a heel on a shoe, it's just that 10,000 steps a day are taken in that one particular environment. And so an easy way to move yourself differently, to redistribute the load, is to simply change what you put on your feet.

**Shawn Stevenson:** You know what's so crazy, is some people subject themselves to even more shoe pressure, you know? I'm thinking about- I don't know why this popped up, but people who don't want to get creases in their Air Max or their Jordans or whatever, and I'm thinking of this because I saw my son- this was last year, and I caught him like walking like without actually bending his foot.

I'm like, 'What are you doing? You look like you pooped your pants. What are you doing?' And he was like, 'Creases, Dad. Creases.'

I'm like, 'Are you serious? You've got that kind of like poverty mindset, you're going to like mess up the way that you're walking?' Then we got into like a talk about some of the stuff that you teach.

But anyways, but here's what I want to ask you about, is like when we think about shoes that are more like these minimalist shoes now. Like we've got the Vibrams, and- but some folks, Katy, they might be like, 'I don't want to just wear these five-fingered toes, Katy. I might get hit with the, 'What are those?' Right? I don't want to get hit with that.'

So is it an option- I know you said there's nothing wrong with wearing heels, but so if people want to rock some stilettos, but is it a good supplement to like let's spend more time without shoes if you're going to wear shoes that can be kind of not advantageous for your health? Does that make sense?

**Katy Bowman:** Yeah, it's like food. You know? So I think that we have this notion that if you eat a kale salad it negates the crème brûlée. Like we actually have this



belief that there's forces fighting in between us, and that they're all shooting each other, and that the kale salad will triumph.

It's not. They're just both inputs into your body, and your body is adapting simply to what you do. So we all have the crème brulee need in some way. Like so you're going to find throughout this entire pursuance of wellness that you're like, 'You know what? This crème brulee thing,' this is just an analogy.

Like whatever it is in your life that you're like, 'I know it's not the best for me, but the fact that it brings me joy and I identify with it,' like that has to be its own nutrition as well.

Like you have to love you and what you do, but what you have now is like, 'I have a high heel hangover now because I indulged in this thing that when I was doing it, or wearing it felt great,' so then now you have though an understanding to not be like, 'There's something wrong with my feet, and I can't understand.'

Or like, 'My back or this or whatever went out.' You can associate it to your choices, and now you're not a victim any longer to this thing in your body that you don't understand that keeps coming up.

You're like, 'Oh, okay well then the next time that comes up, I think you will actually feel differently about the aftermath of whatever it is that you do because you will have recognized that that aftermath too is part of your choice.

Like you value- you've evaluated it and chosen, you are in charge of you, and you get to do, and then maybe you have some correctives of going, 'Okay you know what? I'm not going to wear those shoes for thirty days.'

And luckily the choices aren't like Vibrams, and then shoes that aren't good for you.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah.

**Katy Bowman:** There are so many options now.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Right.

**Katy Bowman:** And I think again, you know we talk about consumers being the pressure on these companies, and I have seen a radical- there has been a lot more companies stepping up to creating- like I even just saw like traditional men's dress shoes that they've actually- they're flat, zero drop, but they've carved the side to make them look like they have a heel.

Because they understand that again, success in the office or in the workplace, sometimes require that you don't come across as total counterculture or whatever.

You know, like so they're meeting people where they are. So I just think that's a great place to be to see that people are problem solving to go, 'I want both.' Like I want elements-

Like my daughter is a good example. My daughter, different than me, loves fashion and dressing up and heels and all this stuff that is not a value system.

Like I've always thought that like, 'Oh this is because you've been exposed to a set of values and you're trying to keep up with your peers.' It's not within our small culture, sub-culture, to have that exposure.

But I've just recognized that her love of painting her body, and like braids, and all these things that she does is a very natural thing for humans called adornment.

You know, humans have been adorning themselves for a long period of time in a way that shows who they are inside or stands out.

You know, whether it's people putting rings around their neck to stretch their neck. Like I'm not sure how that's tremendously different than some of the things that we do that change the shape of our body.

I don't know if extending the length of your neck is going to interfere with your thyroid, or your swallowing, or whatever, but it doesn't really matter. It's just those cultural practices.

So once I could see like this girl needs adornment, right now high heels is what she perceives because it's the adornment that she most sees when we're out, and whatever.

So then it's like, oh so I started getting her foot jewelry, and I started getting her shoes that would have the flexibility and the flatness but were covered with like jewels, and like were shiny.

So I found the need that actually needed to be met, and just figured out a different way. So I think if we could all do that for the thing that we perceive we can't let go, see if you can break it down into variables where you can get some of the physical robusticity that you're after alongside this other thing of yours that is who you are.

Right? Like you have to honor who you are on the inside. So maybe you just have to work a little harder at figuring out a way to meet multiple needs.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Oh that's a perfect way to end. Katy, you're the best and of course there are so many more things I want to ask you about, so you have to come back on.

**Katy Bowman:** Next time, the fifth time.

**Shawn Stevenson:** So yes, you'll be the first fifth time person coming on the show, and I can't wait. Again, like I've got so much stuff top of mind to talk to you about, so I'm excited.

But today, just an immense amount of insights, and ah-ha moments for myself, and I know the folks listening. So I'm just really grateful for you. Just I'm just grateful for you, and doing your thing, and being amazing. So thank you.

**Katy Bowman:** Likewise. You're just one of my favorite people, so as many times as you want, we'll keep doing this show.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I receive that. So can you let people know where they can find out where your books are at, and also how to connect with you online?

**Katy Bowman:** You can get my books at any bookstore hopefully, but [www.NutritiousMovement.com](http://www.NutritiousMovement.com), you go there and you can see which book would be best for you. There's videos to help you get moving, there's the portal to the podcast, there's eighty or ninety episodes of podcasts you can listen to.

So if you're curious about any of this, it's all- there's hundreds of hours of just free content to start working through, and start getting a sense of like what this whole nutritious movement thing is all about.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Perfect. Katy Bowman, everybody.

Thank you so much for tuning into this episode today. I hope you got a lot of value out of this. I know that I did. It's one of my favorite humans, alright?

Just incredible, incredible work, and just getting us to think differently, you know? We get so caught up in our own little boxes, and oftentimes they aren't even our boxes, they're like other people's boxes, and we're thinking in those parameters and missing out on the grandness of life, and also the simplicity of life sometimes.

You know, and just kind of getting back to basics, you know? Just basic awareness of your body, and how your body operates in space.

And I don't think that there are too many things that are more important than that, because this is really where we live, this is where your spirit resides, is within that incredible body of yours.

So getting to learn from Katy is just priceless to say the least, and also I just want to make a quick note, no disrespect to Vibrans, alright? I have some, okay? I'm not trying to disrespect them, it's just somebody might get hit with the, 'What are those?' And I don't want that to happen.

But I love the Vibrams, they're even- and this is something else that Katy shares, different companies that are making these more minimalist shoes, and I've even got some boots that are- they're flat bottom, and they're really cool because I like the fashion too.

I know you can't see my pants right now, but when I walked in people were like, 'I can see you. I see you.' Because my pants, they jump out, alright?

So they're like some really cool Adidas track pants that you've never seen before. Alright? I'll just put it like that.

Make sure you follow me on Instagram, and Katy, alright? I'm @ShawnModel and I'll put Katy's Instagram in the show notes, alright? You can check out- I'll probably put something up about my pants today because they're deserving of my pants.

And also again, this is just about finding the pieces, and I'm so- how Katy wrapped this episode is like this is also about your individual spirit, and your individual soul.

Like that crème brulee thing that you have in your life that has to do with the clothes that you wear, or the things that you kind of engage in that might not be the ideal thing for creating kind of a perfected human unit, but so what if it really fills you up?

But we want to be mindful of like let's avoid the side effects as much as we can so we cannot just enjoy that aspect of our lives, but continue that for many years to come in a healthful manner.

So I hope that makes sense. Rock your stilettos. Also take some time, do some gut smashing with the ball, spend more time barefoot so your feet can actually get to do what feet are supposed to do.

Hang out, grab a branch, human kettlebell, alright? You heard it here first. Somebody make the tee-shirt, alright? I want my cut, alright?

I appreciate you guys immensely. We've got some incredible episodes coming up, so make sure to stay tuned.

Take care, have an amazing day, and I'll talk with you soon.

And for more after the show, make sure to head over to [www.TheModelHealthShow.com](http://www.TheModelHealthShow.com). That's where you can find all of the show notes, you can find transcriptions, videos for each episode, and if you've got a comment you can leave me a comment there as well.

And please make sure to head over to iTunes and leave us a rating to let everybody know that the show is awesome, and I appreciate that so much.

And take care, I promise to keep giving you more powerful, empowering, great content to help you transform your life. Thanks for tuning in.